

represent, not only the greatness of the work to be done, but also the obstacles in the way of its speedy accomplishment. Before Zerubbabel as God's agent these difficulties would vanish, the mountain would become a plain. The headstone refers to the crowning piece, the last put upon the temple when completed. This would be done with shoutings, signifying the great triumphs achieved, and with the benediction, "May the favor of God rest upon it."

Vs. 8, 9. The angel speaks direct to the prophet and gives him the most assuring promise and encouragement of the speedy completion of the work. What the angel had foretold would be sure to come to pass, and that in a short time.

V. 10. Among the Jews and especially among those outside were those who sneered at the feeble efforts that were being made to build the temple. Since God's eyes look with favor and encouragement upon this work, no man should venture to despise it, small as may be its beginnings. The seven eyes indicate divine watchfulness. God's providential care was over the work and therefore it could not fail. The people may have been dissatisfied with Zerubbabel. "He belongeth to the day of small things. He did not appear like Solomon in all his glory. He appeared like a common man rather than like a great ruler."

Lesson Applied

1 *Angel Messengers.*—The Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, has much to say about angels. All along the way they have ministered to God's people, carrying messages, doing errands for the Father. At the birth of Jesus, in the wilderness during the temptation, in the agony of the garden, and during all the ministry of Jesus, angels were his messengers, and ministering servants. In the midst of the storm and in the darkness an angel stood by Paul bringing to him the most assuring words. Have angel visits ceased? No, there are still ministering spirits, tho they do not come to us and speak audibly as they did in times of old, but in every good book we read, in every pure life with which we associate, in every verse of the Bible, in every pure thought we think, in these God's angel comes to us waking us out of our sleep and calling us to life and activity.

2 *Shining for God.*—The candlestick suggests the need of light. That is what every Christian ought to be, a shining light. God wants us to shine in this dark and sinful world. Into all the dark places of the earth God wants us to pour the pure light of heaven. The place to begin is with our own hearts. Pure hearts and pure lives are shining lights in this world of sin and darkness. If therefore we are obedient, trustful, patient, reverent, gentle and unselfish, kind and thoughtful, true and helpful, we will be lights for God, shining brightly, leading the wayward into right paths. To shine for God requires self-sacrifice. A lamp burns out, it consumes oil and wick. It is expensive to

burn a light. So it costs to shine. To be unselfish, forgiving, to love our enemies, to bear injuries sweetly, to make personal sacrifices, to be gentle and kind in an unkind world, these can not be done without a price.

3. *The Source of Light.*—The figure of the lamps, the seven pipes and the trees, is very suggestive. The supply of oil was not in the lamps, not in the candlesticks, not in the pipes, but in the trees. With these, pipes were connected. If we would shine for Jesus we must be vitally connected with him. There must be union with Christ, the true vine, Christ in us and we in him. Disconnected from Christ we can not long shine for him.

4. *The Day of Small Things.*—The people were discouraged in building the temple. The work was so great, the laborers were few and weak, the obstacles to be overcome were so many, the people almost despaired, seeing no hope for completion of what they had begun. But the prophet encouraged them. Not by human power, not by human strength, but by the spirit of the Almighty. God does his greatest work, not thru human strength, but thru human weakness.

Heart Talks On the Lesson

Selected.

In the sixth chapter of Ezra, verse 14, we read that the elders of the Jews builded and prospered thru the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah, and so the house was finished according to the commandment of God. By the same means we prosper in spiritual building.

The word of God builds us up. It instructs, strengthens, encourages. There we find the Architect's perfect plan and model; if we neglect, to study it we hinder the building by putting in unsightly and ill-fitting stones which have to be torn out and replaced by others of his own fashioning. The most consistent, beautiful, symmetrical, attractive Christians are reverent lovers and students of the Bible.

Haggai cheered the people to be strong in the midst of trial; Zechariah told them not to let their own weakness discourage them, for the work did not depend upon their strength, but upon the might of God's Spirit.

Here is our hope in the Christian life. Be of good cheer; be not afraid; rest in the Lord; believe in him, so shall ye be established, "for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." He worketh. All we have to do is to let him work unhindered. Are there, then, no struggles for a Christian? Is there no conflict? Do we not sing,

"Sure I must fight if I would reign?"

Yes, there are struggles; there are battles; the will must be not passive, but active and firm; a Christian needs spiritual muscle to be an overcomer. But the struggle and the effort are only to keep off the foes that would hinder the Spirit's work in temple building. No labor of ours can repair any part of that ruined shrine. It is wholly done by the regenerating, transforming, sanctifying Holy

Spirit. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly thru Jesus Christ our Savior." (Titus 3:5.) "For by grace are ye saved thru faith; . . . not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9.) God has a purpose to conform us once more to his own likeness in which we were first made; and as he first made us, so it is he who must remake us. When we with firmness, courage, and persistence keep the way clear from hindrances he will do the work until the headstone shall be brought forth with shouting of, "Grace, grace unto it." "We are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord," until we shall be like him—the holy and beautiful habitation of God forever.

"JESUS IN THE LAW AND THE PROPHECIES"

R. R. TEETER.

The subject of prophecy involves many questions of difficulty and of deep and increasing interest, and it would be folly to attempt to cover the entire subject in a single paper. What I shall say upon this subject will be in the support of the Christian religion, and in the main my endeavor will be to bring out those utterances that are generally considered Messianic.

Prophecy as an evidence of revealed religion is a foretelling of future events, so contingent that they could not be foreseen by human sagacity, and so numerous and particular that they could not be produced by chance. Justin Martyr says: "To declare a thing shall come to be long before it is in being, and then to bring about that very thing according to the same declaration—this, or nothing is the work of God."

Some writers have classed prophecies with miracles, and well they may, for a prophecy fulfilled before our eyes is indeed a standing miracle.

The Christian religion stands alone in claiming prophecy as a ground of evidence, and no other religion has used miracles or prophecies, as the foundation for their system. Altho imposters have pretended to work miracles in support of their system, yet the difference between them and the Christian miracles is much the same as the difference between Scriptural prophecies and the heathen oracles. These heathen oracles were given on special application and for special purposes. Not so with the prophecies of the Scriptures, they were never uttered for a selfish end and generally on no solicitation. Sometimes they are relative to individuals and sometimes to nations; and they form one great and harmonious system, not one item of which can be shown to have failed, commencing in the garden and extending thru a period of more than four thousand years.

The prophecy of the coming of Christ was the one for which the Jewish church constantly looked for its fulfillment, and his coming is the event to which the Christian